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INFORMATION GATHERING FACILITY EMPLOYING
DICTIONARY FILE CONTAINING MULTIPLE INQUIRIES

Abstract of the Invention

An information gathering facility is provided to gather
5 information on the state of a computer system. The
information gathering facility includes a dictionary file
data structure having a plurality of inquiries for
ascertaining state information on the system.
The plurality of inquiries are organized into at least one
10 subject group. Each subject group is directed to a different
piece of the state information. At least one group has
multiple records of inquiry. These multiple records of
inquiry are processed such that if a condition of one record
is satisfied then processing terminates for the group,
15 otherwise processing proceeds to a next record and continues
until a condition of one of the records of the group is
satisfied or until all records have been processed. One or
more of the plurality of inquiries comprise instructions
which output a result when a condition of the instruction is
20 satisfied. Thus, the state information to be output is
defined by the results contained within the instructions of
the dictionary file itself.